

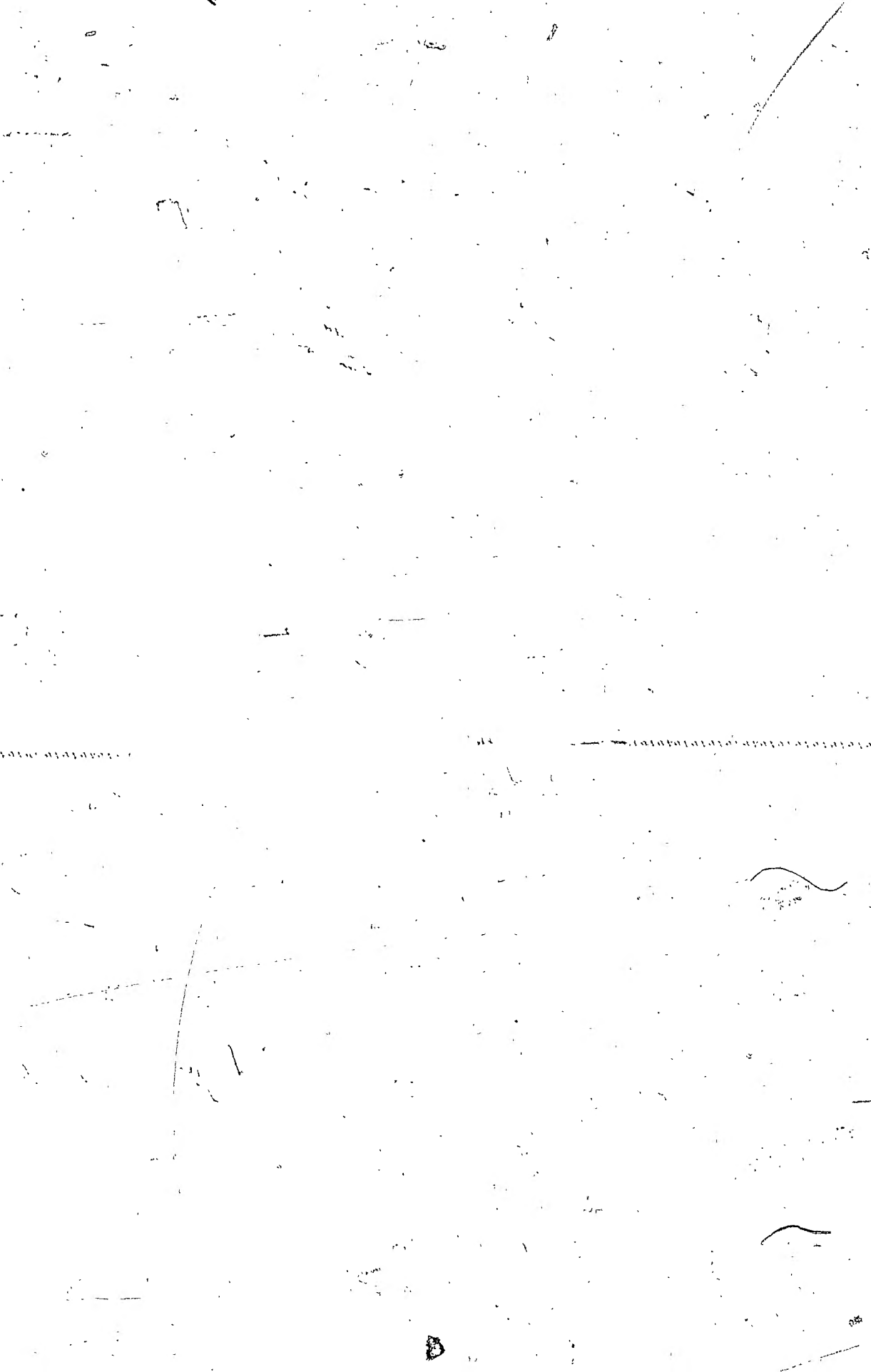
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The Youth Problem of Montana

ROBERT M. STEWART

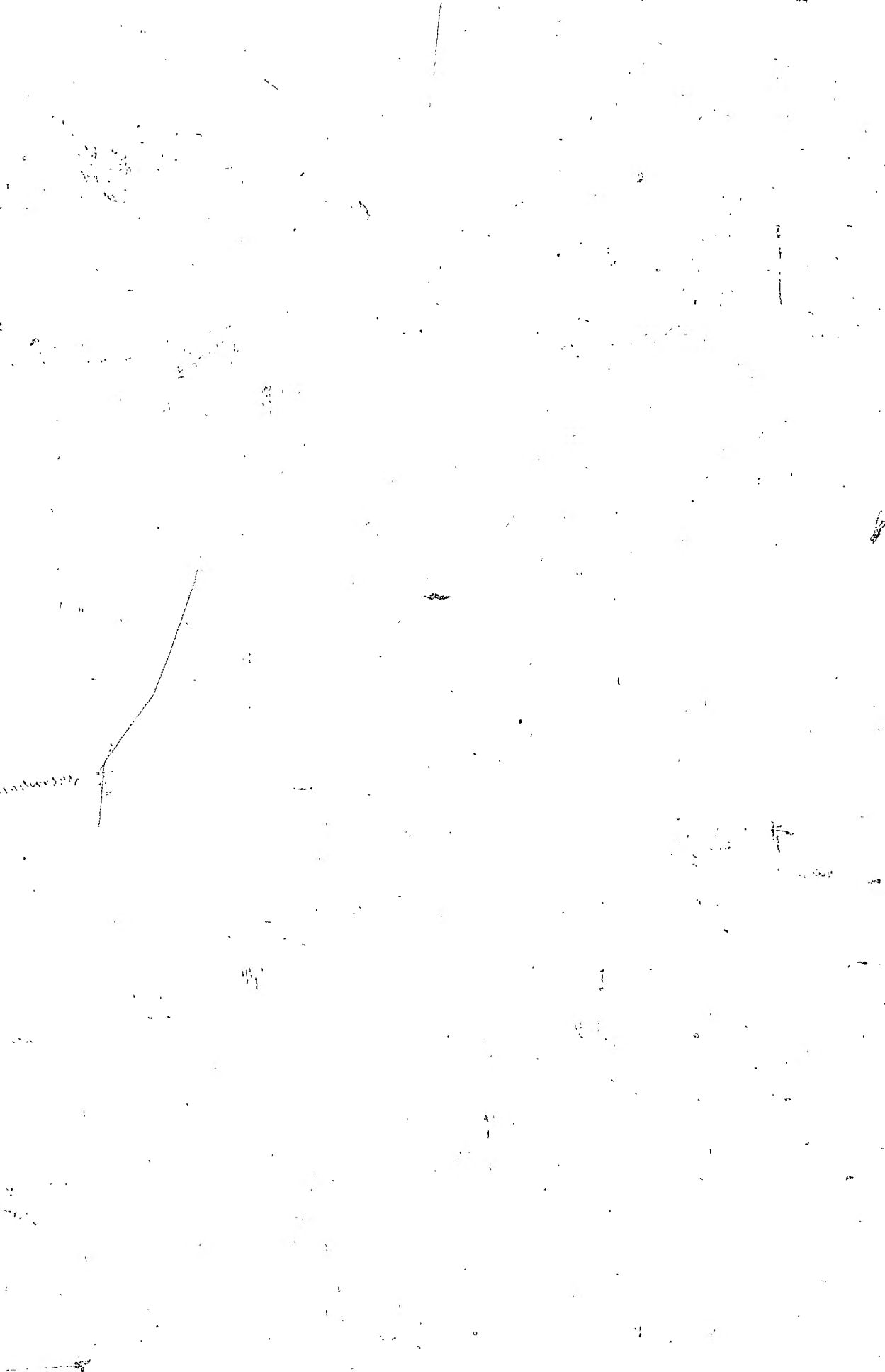
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The Honourable John Bracken,
Premier of Manitoba.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on The Youth Problem of Manitoba, being Project No. 17 under the Economic Survey, and the eighteenth of a series of reports covering many phases of the economic and social life of the Province. This report is the work of Mr Alistair Stewart.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. C. Grant,
Acting Director.

Winnipeg, Manitoba,
February, 1939.

THE YOUTH PROBLEM
OF MANITOBA

BY

ALISTAIR M. STEWART

Published by
Manitoba Economic Survey Board
Director - C.B. Davidson,
Chief Research Associate - H.C. Grant,

March, 1939



FOREWORD.

An attempt has been made in this Survey of the Problems of Youth in Manitoba to present a picture in broad outline of the situation as it exists amongst the younger people. Those who wish to delve further into the details of the problem are urged to read some of the other Surveys which have been published, such as those on Population, Employment, Unemployment, and Education in Manitoba.

It is impossible to make acknowledgement in this brief space to the many who have helped with their criticisms and suggestions but their assistance has been greatly appreciated. Needless to say, the responsibility for whatever views are expressed in the following pages is that of the writer alone. Especial thanks are due to Mr. Davidson and his willing Staff and to the Greater Winnipeg Youth Council, without whose research work some of the following chapters could not have been written.


Alistair Stewart.

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CHAPTER 1.

POPULATION TRENDS AND YOUTH.

In the opening chapters of the invaluable survey of "The Population of Manitoba", (1) the following statement is made: "A population analysis of the population of Manitoba is essential to a proper understanding of the economic and social problems of the province." This is equally true of any attempt to appreciate the position and the conditions of the younger people in Manitoba. Accordingly, a brief background of the population problem must of necessity preface this report. Round figures only are given so that they may be more readily grasped.

In 1936, Manitoba had a population of 711,000 people made up of 369,000 females and 342,000 males.

57% of the population was under thirty in 1936.

There has been a steady decline in this percentage from 1921 when almost 62% were under 30.

In 1936, 61% of the rural population was under 30 as compared with 65% in 1921, and of the urban population, 52.6% were under 30 in 1936 as compared with 57.4% in 1921. This means of course that there is a gradual ageing of the people in the province.

Concurrent with this ageing there has been a serious fall in the birth rate. In 1913, the crude birth rate was about 36 per thousand and it has almost steadily fallen until, in 1936, it amounted

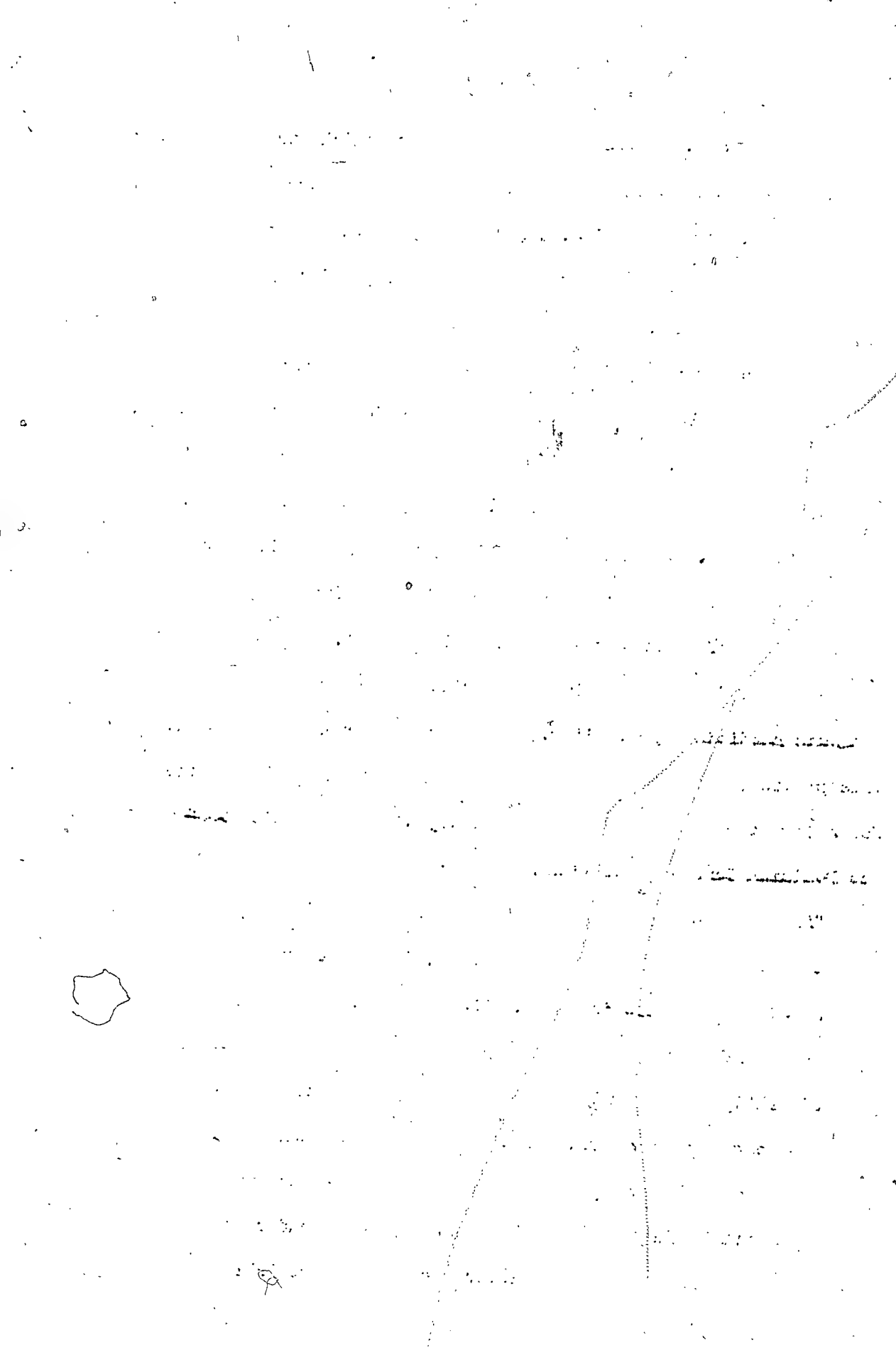
1. The Population of Manitoba, Davidson Grant and Shefrin (Economic Survey)

to 18 per thousand. There are various reasons which can be given for this decline, but by far the most important are the economic conditions under which people are living. The birth rate usually provides an excellent yardstick by which may be measured the people's estimate of their economic future.

Accompanying this fall in the birth rate there has also been, between 1913 and 1936, a gradual decrease in the death rates from 13.10 to 8.7 per thousand. The death rate per thousand is going to rise shortly, due to the previously mentioned facts that the population is steadily getting older, and the number of young people is decreasing.

The general marriage rates in this province have declined from a figure of 13.24 per thousand in 1913, to 8.1 per thousand in 1936 and this decline may also be attributed in large measure to the economic conditions prevailing. The decrease has not been unique to this province but has been general throughout the Dominion as the following extract from the "Annual Survey of Education in 1935" by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics shows:-

"Among those young men in the age group 20-24 in 1921 there were 179 per thousand married, in 1931 only 142, a decrease of more than 20%. The corresponding decrease in the number of girls married of the same age was considerably less, only 13.6% for the reason that they tended to marry older men. This general postponement of marriage in the decade has been accentuated in the years since 1931. The number of young men marrying under the age of 25 was considerably lower each year since 1931



than the annual average of the five-year period preceding the census although the population at this age has increased. The whole trend to later marriages gives rise to many problems, among them the effect on the health and morale of the younger people about which there is little recorded in statistics. Illegitimate births, however, are recorded and as there can be little doubt of a causal connection between their increase and the growing frequency of marriage postponement it is worth recording that in the eight provinces (Quebec excepted) for which statistics have been compiled since 1921 the proportion of illegitimate births has doubled in that period; one birth in fifty was to an unmarried mother in 1921; one in every twenty-five in the latest three years recorded, 1932-34."

As far as Manitoba is concerned the following extract is taken from Dr. Wood's report on education. (1)

"The percentage of married men in the youngest marriageable age group of 15 - 19 years dropped in the male population from 1.59% in 1911 to 0.19% in 1931, and in the female population from 8.88% to 4.82% during the same period.

In the 20 - 24 year age group of males the proportion varied from 13.24% in 1911 to 15.16% in 1916, 10.45% in 1926 and 11.50% in 1931; that for females dropped from 47.15% in 1911 to 35% in 1931.

"In 25 - 34 year age group, the proportion of males married rose from 51.94% in 1911 to 59.84% in 1921 and de-

creased to 51.83% in 1931. For females of this group there was an increase to 79.20% in 1916 and a decrease to 74.41% in 1931."

One of the most urgent present problems is the drain on our human resources which is shown below:-

Births - - - 1931 - 36	68,000
Deaths - - - 1931 - 36	<u>30,000</u>
Net increase	38,000

Population - - 1936 Census	711,000
----------------------------	---------

Population - - 1931 Census	<u>700,000</u>
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Actual population increase	<u>11,000</u>
----------------------------	---------------

<u>Difference</u>	<u>27,000</u>
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The discrepancy between the two figures simply means that some 27,000 people have left the province between the years 1931 - 36 and of that number the vast majority were young men under 35 years of age. This drain is going to have serious social consequences and there is no reason to believe that it has stopped.

It drives home once again, the fact that as it is the older people who are being left, the average age of the population is bound to increase and it further means that there is going to be a heavy charge on the funds of the province when these people qualify for the Old Age Pension. It means that thousands of potential home-builders, home-makers, and, to put it bluntly, taxpayers have gone, thus making the burden of taxation heavier on those who are left.

The point is stated clearly in "The Population of Manitoba"; "From this very standpoint it is important that Manitoba as a province put forward a serious effort to maintain and to give economic opportunity in the province to the unprecedented number of young people now from 15 to 24 years of age. While their opportunities for gaining employment and securing proper rewards for their services may be limited at the present time, Manitoba unmistakably needs these young people in the community. Should by any chance, this group - which is the mobile group in any population - decide that better opportunities lie elsewhere and leave the province in significant numbers, greater difficulties will be created for the province than are now created by the degree of unemployment which at present exists."

Many of our most energetic and ambitious young people have left Manitoba, but despite this loss it is interesting to note that the percentage of the rural and urban population has remained approximately the same for the past 24 years, namely - rural 56% and urban 44%. A possible implication which may be drawn from this is that there has been a steady drain of rural youth into the city and a similar drain out of the city, out of the province and even out of the country.

It is always easy to be wise after the event but nevertheless, even a cursory examination of the census reports should have shown the authorities that a dangerous problem was arising. The number of children under 5 in 1916 reached the all time high level of 79,000, an increase of 16,000 over the 1911 census. These chil-

dren were due to become of working age from 1930 onwards. It would have been extraordinarily difficult to fit them into the economy of the province even under the best conditions, but when the full impact of the economic depression hit Manitoba at the same time, then many of the elements of tragedy entered into the situation. This fact may have been realized but nothing was done about it.

Manitoba is not a manufacturing province. Furthermore, there is a steady drift off the land which is not merely a manifestation of Western Canada but which is common to the whole country. It is a human trend and it will be exceedingly difficult to reverse. And so with industry unable to take on any appreciable number of new employees and with the prospects of employment on the farm being almost negligible, we have this tremendously large number of young people coming on to a labor market which cannot absorb them.

That is the immediate problem.

CHAPTER 11.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT.

The employment situation amongst young people in Manitoba is deplorable. Everyone admits there is a problem, but few seem to realise how serious it is. The table which follows depicts the situation more clearly than words can do. Once again only round figures are used. Several estimates are given but the only one which needs further comment is that dealing with farm laborers working for little or no wages. The total number of farm laborers in the age group 14 - 24 is 28,000 and while it is not known definitely that 15,000 are working for little or no remuneration, nevertheless, experience would indicate that the figure is a conservative estimate.

<u>ESTIMATE</u>	<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Population, 6 - 24	138,000	137,000	275,000
Deduct: -			
At School	72,000	71,000	143,000
Gainfully Occupied	49,000	21,000	70,000
At University etc.	3,000	3,000	6,000
	<u>124,000</u>	<u>95,000</u>	<u>219,000</u>
	14,000	42,000	56,000
Add: -			
Known unemployed	5,000	2,000	7,000
	<u>19,000</u>	<u>44,000</u>	<u>63,000</u>
Farm laborers working for little or no wages	15,000	-	15,000
	<u>34,000</u>	<u>44,000</u>	<u>78,000</u>

There are about 78,000 young people in Manitoba between the ages of 14 and 24 who are without gainful employment. Out of that group it is known that 16,000 have never worked at all and that about 90% of them are unskilled in any trade. To deal with this whole problem there is a part time Commission for Youth Training. It should not be taken as a personal criticism to say that the Commission cannot cope with the task.

The Commissioners are busy men. Each has a prior loyalty and each is giving of his best to the younger people. But it is only a spare time task and they would probably be the first to admit that this is a whole time task. A Youth Administration is required, composed of trained men. It is perhaps too much to hope that a separate department be formed to deal with the situation, although it promises to be more permanent than is pleasant to think about.

If there is to be no separate department, then the Administration should be set up under the Minister of Education. Provided that trained and efficient assistants are obtained, the work of the minister should not be greatly increased. The suggestion that the rehabilitation of youth be handled by the Department of Education is made very deliberately.

In the first place, the province has become relief minded and the youth problem has nothing to do with relief. Secondly the work, by its very nature, is educational. There are vacancies in industry here and there. Not many it is true, but a trained young person can more readily see and grasp the opportunities which are

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available than an untrained one. The younger people must be equipped to seize the opportunity when it offers itself and the Department of Education is the most logical one to supervise their training. Naturally the fullest co-operation from the Department of Labor would be necessary.

An analysis of the gainfully employed is interesting. Out of a total of 21,000 girls gainfully employed in the province and who are between the ages of 14 and 24, the occupations in which the largest numbers are found are as follows:-

Saleswomen	1,800
Stenographers	1,800
Nurses, graduates and in training	1,200
Teachers	1,100
Waitresses	900
Seamstresses etc.	600
Domestic help	9,300

In the same age grouping, there are about 49,000 boys gainfully occupied in Manitoba and 80% of them are in the following categories:-

Mechanics	600
Messengers	800
Truck Drivers etc.	800
Hunters and Trappers	900
Salesmen	1,700
Clerks	1,900
Unskilled Workers	3,800
Farm Laborers etc.	29,000

The proportion of the younger people doing unskilled work is very large but many of them have no alternative. In a "Survey of Youth not at School", compiled in Houston, U.S.A. it appears that 42% out of 3,000 out-of-school youth stated that the depression caused them to take work they would not otherwise have considered, while in Denver, the percentage jumped to 71%. It is impossible to estimate the figure for Manitoba for no survey has been made, but the American figures are significant.

Equally significant is the decline in the number of apprentices. Whereas in 1931 there were 925 male apprentices in various trades, that number had fallen to 324 in 1936. In the city of Winnipeg the decline was from 567 in 1931 to 188 in 1936.

A further analysis of the figures available shows that youth is not getting its fair share of employment. In the province there are some 73,000 young men between the ages of 14 and 24 and they represent 30% of the total male population of working age. Yet only 22% of the younger group are gainfully occupied. When the figures for wage earners are taken, the disparity is even greater, for then it appears that the younger group have only 20% of the employment. In this respect the provincial government could well afford to give a lead. The 1936 Census shows that a very small percentage of men under 25 are employed in the province.

One belief which is dying hard is that there is always room at the top. As a matter of fact there is not. The Lynds, in their study of Middletown in the pre-depression years, found that the chances of promotion to a supervisory position amounted



to six in the course of a year from a body of 4,440 workers.

Other authorities state that the opportunity of eventually filling a supervisory or managerial position is limited to rather less than 1% of all who have become unemployed.

But the majority are looking for security rather than anything else. It is true that there is a growing objection to hum-drum manual labor, caused possibly by increased standards in education, yet many of the objections voiced would disappear were working conditions improved, wages increased, and some reasonable degree of security provided.

Many difficulties confront those who try to find a reasonable solution to the problem of the young unemployed, but they must be tackled immediately. It has been proven conclusively that there is a time lag of about two years on an average between leaving school and finding work. One obvious suggestion is to raise the school leaving age to 16. It may yet be necessary to raise it to 18. Another aid, practised in many American cities is the junior employment service.

In this regard, the Information Bulletin issued by the National Employment Commission in November of 1937 can be quoted:-

"Obviously the first and essential requisite if you are to place an unemployed man or woman is a job.. The apprehension is growing that openings for skilled workers may go begging because competent trained workers are not available. It is essential to provide machinery for bringing the worker and the job together. It is essential to create some organization which will find out



where the jobs are, how many there are, their nature, the remuneration offered, the kind of workers required and on the other hand to find out where the workers are, their numbers, qualification, strength, experience and general suitability.

"An efficient employment service should provide and collect necessary statistical information on which the broad planning to meet present and future labor requirements of industry and agriculture can be based. It should be a repository for accurate information on, (1) the labor demands of industry and (2) the available supply of employable workers.

"It should link up with the school on the one hand and the employer on the other, providing the young man or woman, boy or girl who has completed his or her education, with some degree of vocational guidance. It should develop sympathetic co-operation amongst the public. With the data at its command, it should be able to advise on suitable training projects for youth".

And in December 1937, the Bulletin said:-

"Boys and girls attending school across Canada today will tomorrow be men and women facing adult problems. Of late years, some complaints have been heard that students in Canadian schools are not being equipped to meet conditions in that cold and practical world which opens before them when school doors close. It has been argued that frequently students enroll in courses which, present trends in industry being what they are, will not result in employment. Employment is essential. Therefore, it is argued,

why permit young students to waste time and energy learning something which cannot produce employment?

"Whether or not it is true that boys and girls are engaged in these unproductive studies, systematic long distance planning does seem to indicate the wisdom of ascertaining as closely as possible the labor needs of industry, and making this information available for guidance in schools. Such a survey would show the industries in which decreasing or increasing labor demands might be expected.

"If given to the schools, special courses might be undertaken with an intelligent appreciation of the situation. A student would at least have an opportunity of comparing labor trends in different industries before deciding what special line to pursue in his studies.

"Closer co-operation between the schools and the employment service should prove valuable. Information of a helpful nature gathered by the latter might be passed on to the former. Such information, combined with some system of vocational guidance and counselling for young people should prove of very real value". *

* The relationship between the schools and the Junior Employment Service is discussed in the Chapter on Education.

CHAPTER 111.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION.

In a democratic state, the ultimate responsibility for education rests with the people. Unfortunately, many of them have not yet come to realize with Macaulay, that what makes a nation happier and better and wiser can never make it poorer. Education has been too often treated as a handmaiden amongst the services, and the apparent economy may yet prove expensive.

It is through education that we may achieve one of the principal prerequisites of an efficiently working democratic system - equality of opportunity. Secondary education is no longer the privilege of the few, but a university education is frequently beyond the purse of many. If the inclination and capabilities warrant it, any young person should have the benefit of a university education no matter how impoverished he or she may be. The system followed in certain parts of Scotland where, under certain conditions, any youth may receive without cost to himself or his family, a free university education is one which only at first glance appears to be expensive. In the final analysis it is not. Honest education in a nation can provide both a tangible and an intangible asset which will yet be the greatest safeguard of democracy.

Opinions are changing, no matter how slowly, as to the functions of education in the community. Most parents are determined to give their children an opportunity in life which they themselves

missed, and they believe that it is largely through education that this opportunity will come. Elementary school facilities are available to almost every child and secondary school facilities are increasing. Yet, and it is the younger people themselves who are asking the question, of what use are these facilities if they do not succeed in fitting them for employment.

Some sympathy can be extended to this feeling. There are 16,000 young people in Manitoba between the ages of 14 and 24 who have never worked at any time, and of that number nearly 90% are completely unskilled in any trade or vocation. The school system must take some responsibility for such a state of affairs. But even assuming that all had received some training, on leaving school these young people would have had to confront the strange problem that there was no place for them in the world of work.

To expect an educational system merely to fit its students for work is to place far too narrow an interpretation upon the scope and sphere of education. An adequate educational system is one wherein the school programme is as broad as life itself. It is one which is dynamic and vigorous, which deals with current problems, one which would encourage the study of citizenship and government, it is one which would try to produce intelligent and independent men and women. To achieve even a fraction of that means that a number of old ideas must be changed.

That is not necessarily a bad thing if it is done in the spirit in which Disraeli said that "he was a conservative to conserve that which is good, a radical to root out that which is bad".



To change the educational system to meet the needs of the day, a task which must be faced sooner or later, is going to be difficult for it does not mean merely the rehashing of an old curriculum. It means creating a new system of instruction. Not only will much of the material be new, but also the method of teaching it. One factor which will slow down any new programme will be the lack of qualified instructors. But it is vitally essential that education does not lag too far behind the times.

One of the greatest handicaps in Manitoba has been the lack of financial resources but Dr. Woods' "Survey of Education in Manitoba" (1) shows where some economies can be made. The money thus saved can be used in other and more profitable directions.

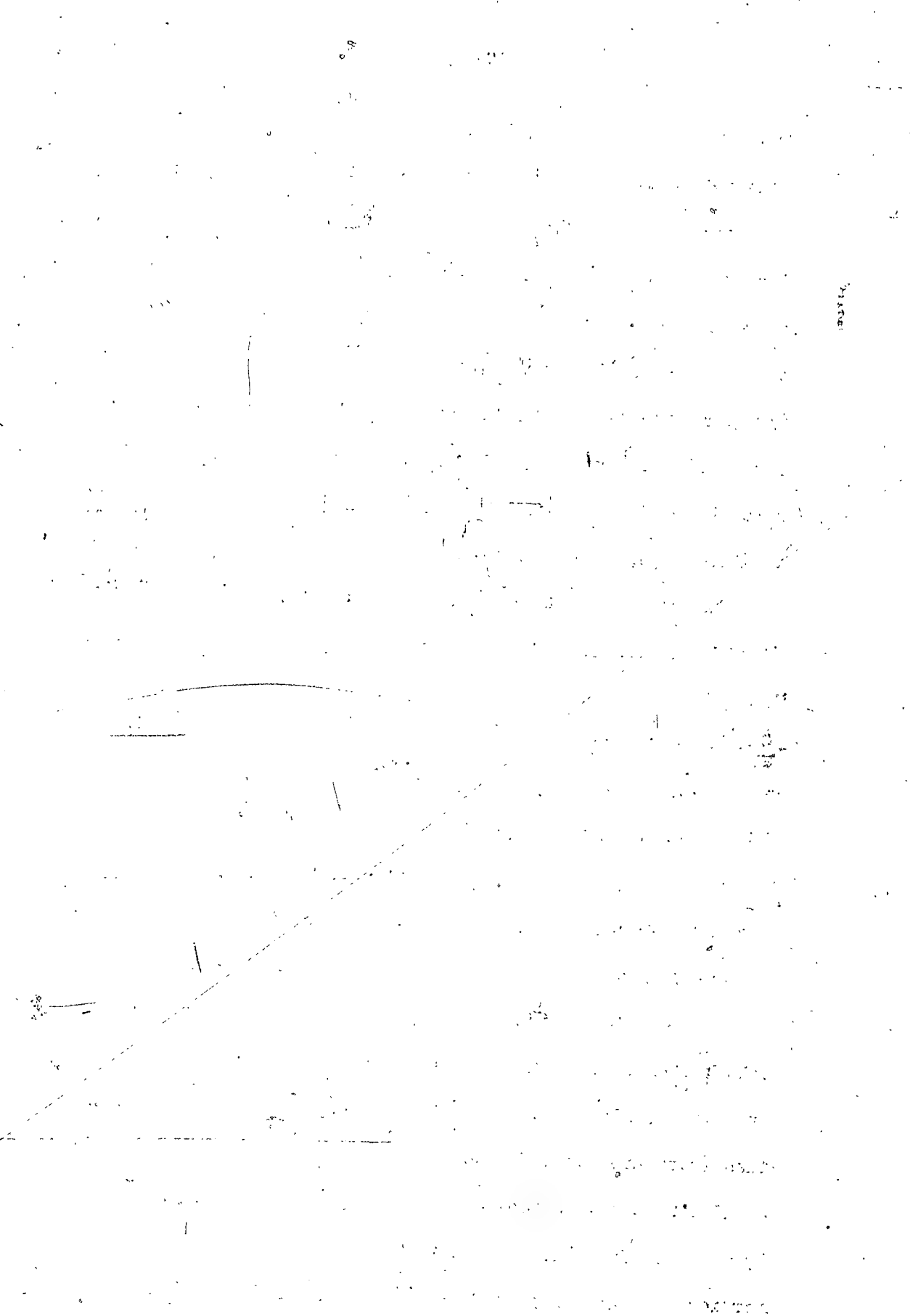
One of the effects of the changing times is the decrease in the number of independent workers. Formerly, a boy could often take up his life's work where his father left off. The parent's assistance was invaluable in training and guiding the boy, but that continuity rarely exists today. In the absence of this training, there has grown up a need for guidance which is not being adequately met. The 1935 "Annual Survey of Education" has this to say on the matter:-

"The various policies designed to facilitate the passage of youth between school and employment in other countries aim not only to insure that young people find jobs, but to see that they find those for which they are best fitted by individual characteristics and training. Even with today's shorter working week, a person's occupation usually engages the greater part of his working hours, and he is an unfortunate drudge who finds nothing of value

but his pay cheque in more than half his life. Unless he is a more than ordinarily faithful servant, neither will his employer's best interests be served. So in older countries there have arisen institutes to examine the abilities, the aptitudes, and interests of young people, to advise them and their parents as to what types of work each child seems suited for, and to help employers find the young people best fitted for the jobs they have to offer. Like tests of general intelligence, examinations of this kind have their limitations, but employers have attested their faith in them by paying for their scientific development and application.

"Another phase of guidance is to acquaint parents and children with the nature of different occupations, so that they may more intelligently choose for themselves. Most of this work is done through the schools, and with the assistance or co-operation of government employment services, as in the case of England.

Guidance of this kind must start early in the child's life, while he is still in the elementary school, so that in choosing which secondary school to attend he will not pick the technical school because it has distinguished itself in his estimation by winning the inter-collegiate football championship or the academic high school because of a similar situation in hockey. We are assured by city secondary school principals that reasons of less weight than these are not infrequently the determining factor in deciding a child's further schooling, and thus his future life, and that by adequate attention to inter-school records in athletics a particular school may increase its enrolment by a substantial



"percentage in a single year.

"A few schools and school boards in Canada are pioneering in this phase of vocational guidance, but no programme on a scale as wide as provincial has yet been developed in any province. Such activities as these are probably portents of a coming practice in Canadian education which will help to close the gap that has developed between school and industry and make for happier as well as more efficient working lives. This last is of the first importance for the very essence of democracy is in its assumption of the worth of individual men and women; and for them to achieve this assumed value, either to themselves or to society, they must have the fullest opportunity for the development of their best, but differing potentialities. No effort can be spared to see that each youth enters the vocation in which his capabilities will have the greatest scope."

But to put into practice only such a scheme as envisaged above, modified of course to suit particular circumstances, would not be completing the task on hand. "There are" as Sheridan complained of Fox, "many people who are damned surly about facts" and one of the distressing facts of today is that we spend large sums of money on young people while they are at school and whenever we believe their education to be sufficient, leave them to fend for themselves. To spend money in altering this fact may prove objectionable to some, but it must be done.

There must logically follow from a scheme of vocational guidance given while at school, an employment service, and to be thoroughly

effective, this service must start before the youth leaves school.

An employment service which is only in operation when it is approached by the younger people is not sufficient. It is true that the capabilities of the youth as far as employment goes still have to be tested, but the knowledge gained about him while at school plus his record in the fields in which he has studied should prove particularly useful. There only remains then, the question of establishing liaison with industry and it is to be hoped that if the whole project is clearly explained to business men that they will give it their whole-hearted support. It will pay them to do so.

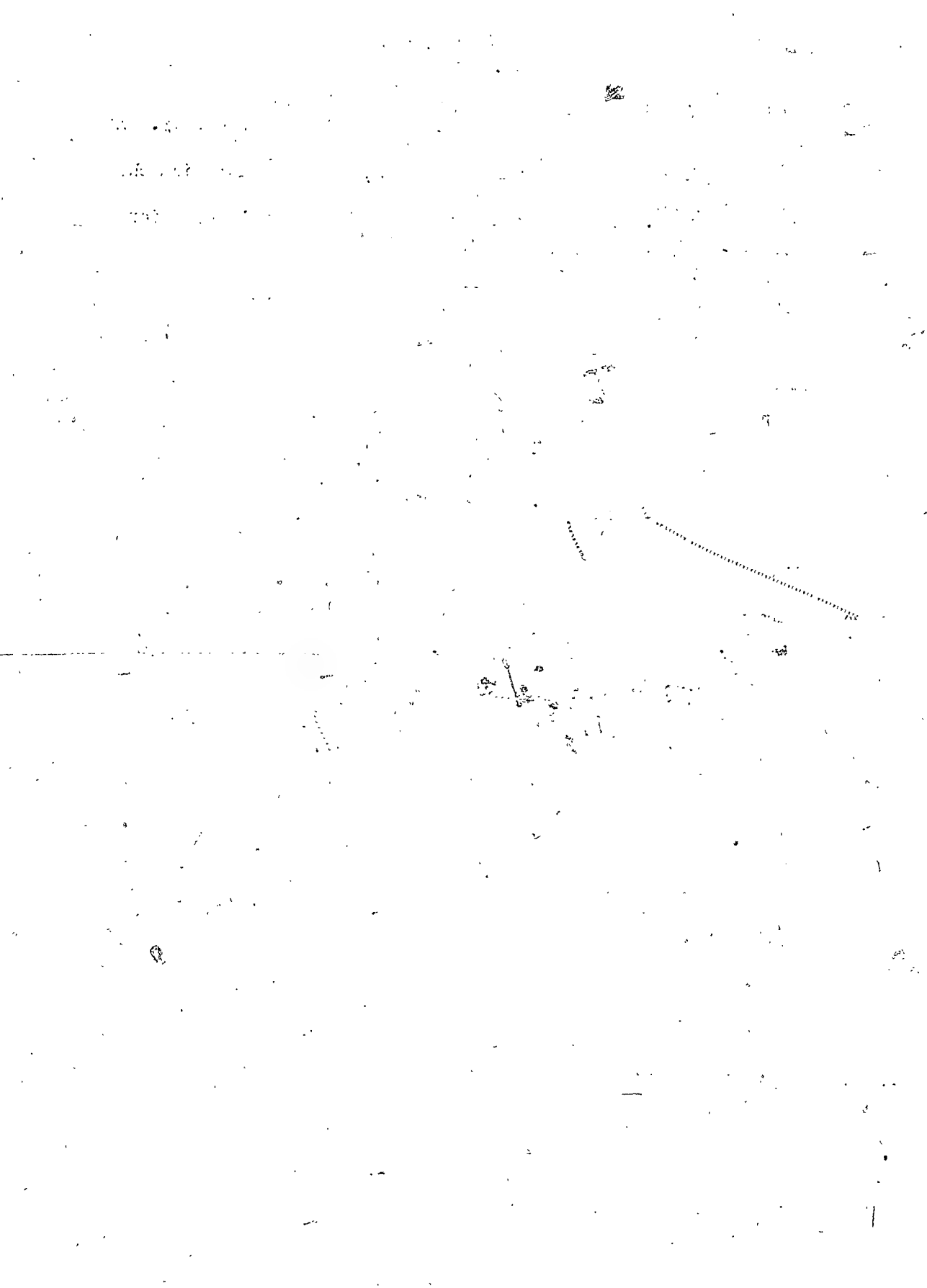
Only a minority will be lucky enough to find employment immediately, and the others must be looked after by extending the scheme of so-called vocational training which is now in operation. The objects of this course should not necessarily be to show a young person how to make a living at any one particular job, but rather to keep him occupied and interested and to give him a general training in the hope that, if anything turns up, a partly trained person is more likely to get the work than an untrained one. Such training should be financed by federal funds.

There is an insistent demand for vocational training in the schools. The classical curriculum is vocational in its nature in so far as it leads to University, and the professions, but only the minority of the students continue in that direction. A large number of children could be better educated through the greater use of their hands. Different children have different capabilities and vocational training may be of immense service to a student to whom the liberal education has little appeal.

It is a mistake to assume that there must necessarily be antagonism between liberal and vocational education. A good, sound elementary training is a necessity to all children. It is when they are receiving their secondary schooling that the necessity for a different training may appear, but even then the liberal and the vocational courses should be supplementary to each other. A report to the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, states:-

"The relation between the liberal and the vocational parts of the secondary school curriculum has been a subject of violent controversy in recent years. The time has come when this controversy must end if young people are to have proper preparation for life. A plan of instruction must be adopted which will include for all pupils both vocational education and general, or liberal education, in the true sense of the word. The two kinds of education are not antithetical but supplementary. The really liberal curriculum, as has been pointed out, is that which prepares for the common activities of all citizens. The vocational curriculum is that which trains pupils to follow the lines dictated by their individual differences. How long the vocational curriculum is to keep any given pupil in school will be determined largely by the exactions of the vocation chosen. Whatever the period of schooling, the school should at all times aim to cultivate two types of intellectual maturity, two types of information, and two types of interpretation of the facts known to modern science and letters - one vocational in its interests and applications; one general,

"directly related to the common social life of humanity. At the beginning of secondary education, general education should be stressed. During the later years, vocational education should come into prominence".



CHAPTER IV.

WHAT IS BEING DONE.

When the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Plan was inaugurated in 1937, Manitoba was the first province in Canada to accept the invitation of the Dominion government to enter into an agreement to put the plan into effect. The work was given to a commission of three men, the Hon. Robert Jacob K. C., the Rev. J. W. Clarke and Mr. A. MacNamara.

For the fiscal year ending 31st March, 1939, \$150,000.00 was allocated to Manitoba by the federal government on the understanding that the provincial government put up a like amount or, if less was spent, that the province spend dollar for dollar from the federal funds available.

Under the plan, the province has a programme of seven major activities.

1. Summer Camps and Forest Reserves.

Last summer the provincial government carried on with its project of establishing camps in forest reserves. To these camps were sent young men from urban districts who were put to work cutting fire-guards, clearing out underbrush and doing other useful and necessary protective work. The men were paid .21¢ per hour for a 44-hour week and they were required to pay for their board out of their earnings. It has been calculated that their net earnings approximated \$15.00 per month.

Eight hours out of the forty-four were devoted to instructional work in practical subjects pertaining to forest conservation, wood-craft, land-surveying and other similar activities. During their free time the



boys were encouraged to take up sports and equipment was provided for this purpose. Last year 515 young men were each given a three-months' course in one or other of the camps.

2. Household Assistants Schools.

The first Household Assistants School in Canada, supported by a government, was started in Winnipeg and its success was so pronounced that another was opened in Brandon. The school at Winnipeg has room for 23 pupils, that at Brandon for 15, and they are both running at full capacity. The girls are given a course of training in household service under competent instructors and, at the present time, some 200 girls, who were formerly on relief, have found work as domestic servants. Care is being taken to see that the conditions of employment are as fair as possible and the wages received are between \$15.00 and \$25.00 per month.

3. Specialized Service Bureau.

This Bureau is run in cooperation with the Y. W. C. A. and it is attempting to fit girls for suitable employment. They are taught sewing and dressmaking, catering, cooking, the care of children, etc.

4. Industrial Learnership Plan.

Under this plan, any boy or girl who is placed in employment, is given tuition in subjects relative to his or her work in the night schools without any cost to the employer or the employee. Special concessions are made in respect to minimum wage requirements. For instance, an agreement may be negotiated with the employer whereby he gives work to a young man at \$8.00 per week instead of \$12.00 on condition that the employee goes to night school and studies various aspects of his work.

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A placement scheme is run in conjunction with this project but it has not proved very successful. Only 130 boys and girls have been placed up to date. The reason for such a small number of placements may perhaps be attributed to the business conditions prevailing, but this scheme will never be successful unless industry co-operates in a much more wholehearted manner with the government.

5. Occupational School.

The report of a British Commission on Unemployment Insurance in 1932 has this to say on Occupational Centres:

"We wish to express our strong conviction of the importance of this effort to save juveniles from deterioration, which is inevitably the result of prolonged absence from any regular occupation. Neglect to do what is possible here, would be the most short-sighted of policies and we desire, most earnestly, to press upon both central and local authorities the necessity that this should be regarded as one of the most significant elements in the national treatment of unemployment, and that no effort should be spared to extend and to improve the present service."

An occupational training school has been established in Winnipeg. A factory building was rented and equipped with the necessary machinery and tools. At present there are over 500 boys and girls getting an excellent training in this school from instructors who are essentially teachers with practical experience. This school was started but recently and once the work it is doing is appreciated by the community and once those responsible for the carrying out of the youth training plan realize the

importance of the above quotation, then the scheme will be greatly enlarged.

6. Scholarship Course.

There has been established at the University of Manitoba, a scholarship course for boys and girls who have attained the highest standing in the rural training classes and fifty of these young people have been or are being given a course at the university.

7. Rural Youth Training.

One of the most successful projects started by the provincial government is its rural training scheme and it will be dealt with in a little more detail.

(a). Homemaking Schools for Girls. Schools in homemaking have been opened in various parts of the province and the teachers in each centre were specially trained for the work. Each student is allowed \$10.00 per month towards her board and the schools have been remarkably well attended even allowing for the serious economic situation prevailing in rural Manitoba. Schools have been, or will be, opened at Altona, Birtle, Beausejour, Deloraine, Dauphin, Gimli, Gladstone, Holland, Killarney, Lundar, Manitou, Minnedosa, Oak Lake, St. Norbert, Swan River, Souris, Shoal Lake and The Pas.

(b). Practical Agricultural Courses. The function of these courses is to encourage rural youth to stay on the farm and the instruction which is given deals not only with the practical problems of every day agriculture but includes also an exceedingly valuable course on citizenship. The teaching personnel was carefully selected and trained, and much of the enthusiasm which has greeted the courses in rural areas is the result of

the interest taken in their work, not only by the teachers, but by those responsible for their appointment. Schools are in operation at Altona, Arborg, Binscarth, Boissevain, Carman, Crystal City, Dauphin, Neepawa, Portage la Prairie, Selkirk, Swan River, St. Norbert and Virden.

(c) Rural Youth Community Centres. A great need is being filled by the opening of community centres for young people in different parts of the province. Some thirty-one leaders from rural Manitoba have been brought into Winnipeg and are being trained to direct the project. In the centres, courses in physical education are being provided and instruction is given in hobbycraft for the boys and in handicraft for the girls. Other courses include public speaking and drama. A venture of this type is entirely new to the province, and while the task of developing interest in these centres was not without difficulty, nevertheless it has been accomplished.

The necessity for such a scheme is now being realized and plans are being made to create more in the country. It is difficult to understand why similar centres have not been opened in the cities. They are just as necessary and they would fill an equally great need. There is no lack of precedent to show how successful they have been in other cities. In this respect the commission ~~seems~~ to have been lamentably lacking in vision.



CHAPTER V.

ATTITUDES AND OUTLOOK OF YOUTH

No one can speak with assurance for youth but youth itself. What follows, then, in this chapter is an attempt at interpretation and understanding by the writer, who has been privileged to be most closely associated with the organized Youth Movement of Canada during recent years. During this period youth has become group conscious and vocal. In many countries they have sought direct action - action has alleviated despair. In other countries they have been organized by an all powerful State - organization has alleviated discontent.

In Canada, action on the part of organized youth has been confined to holding provincial and national conferences. During these meetings the attitudes of youth towards our institutions, and what they think of the present and future, are revealed.

There is no clearly defined philosophy amongst youth as a whole, but there are many individual views which when compared reveal a surprising number of common factors. The similarity in the thinking of every group is notable and it is directed in a greater or lesser degree towards change in the economic system. A minority would scrap it entirely, a still smaller minority would retain it intact, but the great mass of opinion believes that certain drastic alterations have to be made if democracy is to have any reality.

The events of the post-war years have had a profound effect upon many of the younger generation. Their thinking has been affected by their circumstances and these have offered little hope for economic security. Eight years of economic depression have left their mark. Change has been so rapid that most of them are bewildered for so many of the standards to which they might have clung have gone by the boards. They are naive, ingenuous as ever, but they are a little more cynical and bitter. They are not revolutionary, but they are intolerant of flagrant wrongs and injustices; they are extremely sceptical yet they are not irreligious.

It has been repeated time and again that the influence of the institutionalised Church is waning. It is true. As one girl said, - she is a waitress, not a highly paid occupation - "We've got a hell of a job keeping going in this world without worrying about the next". That statement might supply an invaluable text for those who would like

to indulge in some heart searching. The religion of youth today demands that the Church be in the van in the fight for social justice and that means for the right of the employee to some measure of protection, by joining a trades union of his own choice without threats of retaliation or intimidation by his employer, the right to a decent standard of living and above all, the right to economic security.

The younger generation wants work but they also want some guarantee that if they carry out that work faithfully, then they will not be discharged because of some event outwith their knowledge. They want more choice in the work they are going to take up. Industry presents innumerable pictures of square pegs in round holes. Young men and women in their search for employment are only too glad to take what is offered whether it is the work for which they are best suited or not. Hence there is a tremendous number of misfits compelled to work in their present capacities because of economic necessity.

Youth is not perturbed about the ever widening activities of government. The growth and increasing complexity of business is reaching the stage where business is ceasing to be solely an economic factor. It is becoming a social factor and when that condition prevails, governments will have to intervene where it is obvious that the best interests of the country and its people are not being served.

The picture of an economic system working automatically and making the necessary adjustments automatically seems to be fading into the past. Governments interfere precisely because adjustments are not automatic and because the general welfare which was supposed to accrue from unlimited individualism has not transpired. In his book, "Society and

Enterprise" A. T. K. Grant has this to say:- "The present position is based upon an anomaly, on the two inconsistent assumptions that one can maintain a freely functioning private enterprise and an expensive set of social services and amenities, paid for out of taxation, side by side" The majority of youth today look towards an increase rather than a reduction in social services and they are willing to accept the inevitable concomitant of still more governmental direction of essential services.

Such an attitude on the part of the younger people is used as a basis for the charge that they have lost their initiative and courage, that they expect the State to be a kindly and paternal institution, that they expect everything to be done for them, that they rarely want work and so on. These charges are not made by any who have a first hand knowledge of the situation but they are commonly believed.

Some students of the Canadian Economy say that Western Canada has a population as big as it can conveniently handle, while others are of the opinion that agricultural Canada is over populated and point to the drift from the land to add weight to their views. It is reasonably certain that the prairies cannot absorb any more people under present conditions and so the placing of large numbers of urban youth on the land is not an answer to the problem. Emigration to any extent is no longer feasible although there has been a considerable exodus to other parts of Canada, and there is little hope of so expanding industry in Manitoba that it will take up much of the slack. Therefore, opportunity being so limited, it is obvious that young men and women have slight hope of improving their conditions by their own unaided efforts.

One result of this situation is that an abnormally large number of young people are still living at home although even there the picture is changing. A gradual disintegration in home life can be seen. The tendency may be deplored but it might not be so harmful as appears at first sight. The home will always be the basic unit of society as we know it, but children are not being influenced by it to the extent that other generations were. While it is an undoubted fact that instruction in the home is paramount, yet it is being tempered by external influences, by the radio, by the cinema, and by the influence of the little community in which the child has its being.

It is early yet to judge the part played by all these factors in moulding the character of the coming generation. The effects, whether good or bad, of radio and the cinema depend upon the knowledge and good taste of those who provide the entertainment, but if the neighborhood is going to play a greater part in the making of the child, then it is essential that it be improved by the addition of such amenities as bathing pools, playing grounds and other recreational facilities.


Closely linked with the home is the question of sex hygiene and psychology and training for marriage. The home is the proper place for such instruction, but unfortunately, the knowledge which parents themselves have gathered is frequently empirical, often scanty and more than occasionally wrong. Some may think it advisable that their children should know certain facts about life but they do not consider themselves capable of imparting the necessary information; others feel that the mention of sex is improper and therefore taboo, while others hesitate to broach the subject, hope for the best, and say nothing. The result has often ended in tragedy.



The startling increases in illegitimate births and in venereal disease cannot be viewed with equanimity, and some scheme must be evolved, which, while not offending the religious scruples of a considerable minority of the population, will at the same time deal effectively with a dangerous situation. Part of the problem arises from the maladjustments caused by lack of opportunity to marry and that in turn is due to conditions experienced during the last eight years.

Allied to teaching in the home is teaching in the schools, and, as yet, the educational system in Manitoba has not adjusted itself to the times. The technical equipment for vocational training and guidance in this province is negligible, and while a liberal school education has its legitimate place, it does not supersede the necessity for practical training. Given the right education, the opportunity for work might be more easily seen.

While it is true that there is no investment like education, its effect may be largely lost unless employment is available for those who have received it. In itself it is not the answer to the problem of youth; neither are community centres nor any of the other palliatives which have been suggested at one time or another. There is no substitute for work.



CHAPTER VI.

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE.

Some Suggestions

It is possible that this chapter may unduly extend the terms of the reference, but recognition of the problems which confront many of the younger people is not enough. Some alleviation of their condition is necessary. In a valuable monograph - Census Monograph No. 9 - published by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, the authors tell us that in the absence of opportunity to become wage-earners themselves, the younger generation have had to become more dependent. The average age of achieving independence is now 18 as contrasted with the age of 16 in 1911 and the statement is made that if this tendency continues unchecked young people in a few years will be dependent on their parents until they are in their twenties.

This question must be answered:- What is to be done with these young people if they cannot be absorbed into industry or commerce until they are twenty or more? They cannot be kept at ordinary schools all the time, neither can they be left footloose to roam the streets as they will. It is true that they may owe the community something but the obligation is two-sided. The community owes them something too, a chance to begin life and until it comes along they must be looked after.

It is useless to provide employment regardless of the conditions under which they are going to work, for employment is a means, not an end. While the primary responsibility for looking after the unemployed is without any shadow of a doubt a federal matter, nevertheless that does not exempt the provincial authorities from responsibility. One sphere in which the province could actively intervene to the benefit of everyone

concerned would be that of passing and enforcing an adequate Minimum Wage Act in Manitoba. Unfair advantage is being taken by some unscrupulous employers today of the desire for work amongst the younger people and in the interests of the community these practices should be stopped. This could be done by more thorough supervision of industries, by extending the Act so that it would cover all classifications of work, and by making the penalties for infringements of the Act so severe that an employer would not find it worth while to break it.

But that is of more concern to those at present working. With regard to those who are unemployed it is interesting to note that surveys which have been made show that there is little, if any, difference between the fundamental needs of Canadian and American youth. Some very comprehensive investigations into the plight of youth have been conducted in the United States and when compared with surveys conducted in this country, several interesting parallels emerge.

Young people today want work, recreation and education. Many of those who are unemployed loaf in pool rooms and at street corners. They cannot afford much, if anything, for recreation and few of them have hobbies whereby they can profitably use their enforced leisure. Naturally, continued idleness is having its effect upon their morale and although this is not yet serious, if it is left unheeded, the Canada of the next generation will have a heavy price to pay for present short-sightedness.

Furthermore, and this must not be ignored, the struggle for



work is having an adverse effect on the unity of the country. Children of various national groups get along with each other at school as well as any children will. There are no animosities and dislikes beyond the normal, but when they leave school and enter the struggle for work, antipathies between the national groups seem to arise in some cases. A strongly-held opinion emerging from discussion with numbers of our younger people not only in Manitoba, but in other provinces, is that the problem of Canadian unity would be solved to a large extent were the people to have a greater measure of economic security.

One of the major trends of the day is the drift into the cities from rural districts. Not all the boys and girls in the rural areas are going to follow a farming life, nor are they all going to stay on the land, for there is no room for them. Accordingly, the exodus to the city is going to continue, thus intensifying the urban problem. Every possible step should be taken to encourage those who are agriculturally minded to stay on the farm. One method by which this may be achieved is by still further expanding the rural courses organized by the provincial government, courses which have amply justified themselves.

Young men and women are brought to a centre near their homes and billeted there for a period extending from six to ten weeks. During this time they are given practical training in farm management, home-crafts and all such subjects which would help to stimulate interest in farm life. These courses which started out as an experiment should now be established on a permanent basis. But while the emphasis on training in rural districts would naturally be placed on the needs of

an agricultural economy, it should not be forgotten that there is as great a need in the country for teaching along vocational lines as in the city.

One of the greatest problems in the province is that of unemployed young men and women in country towns and villages. There may be five or six in one town, fifteen or twenty in another, small numbers in themselves, but in the aggregate very important. Some may eventually be absorbed into agriculture, others may drift into the cities, but in the meantime they are idle.

The experiment might be tried of providing for some typical community, a trained social worker whose duty it would be to help organize and direct the spare time activities of the people, paying especial attention to the younger inhabitants. This worker should be engaged on a full-time basis. He would have to be interested in life in a rural community and should be expected to make his home in the district. The main line of his work would be recreational rather than any other, but it is essential that he should have a knowledge of rural and semi-rural life and its particular needs.

Another experiment which has been tried with success in the country is that of providing recreation centres for the youth of the community. It is early yet to attempt to judge their results but experience in other places has shown that they can only be beneficial and it is advisable to increase their present number.

In the larger cities it is equally necessary to open community centres for the young unemployed. These centres should be located in warehouses or offices or in whatever buildings are at all

suitable and they should be so equipped that the unemployed could regard them as a club. Topical newspapers and magazines should be provided along with adequate library facilities. Practical training of many types could be given and physical training on an orderly basis should be provided with the co-operation of those neighborhood schools and churches which possess gymnasias. The young people enrolled in such centres should be encouraged to form discussion, study and hobby groups, to conduct inter-club debates, to foster amateur theatricals and provision should be made for those who appreciate music and the fine arts. The technique required to run such centres would be evolved mostly from experience. There would have to be trained and friendly supervision, but as far as possible each youth centre should be autonomous in the sense that responsibility for its organization and cleanliness should be left largely in the hands of the younger people.

Courses in domestic training for girls have been held in various centres in the province, and a number of girls got work as a result of that training. Care was taken to ensure their being settled in good homes and the result is that this course is proving useful and popular.

Courses have been held in forestry training in an attempt to keep the younger unemployed men fit, but it is important not to exaggerate the benefits received from such a project. The boys may have received up to three months' valuable practical work in the open air accompanied by a measure of theoretical teaching; nevertheless, there were more than nine months left during the year in which they had nothing to do. The idea behind the forestry training was good

for there is much work in forest conservation to be carried out in Manitoba.

Amongst other recommendations which the provincial forester Col. H. I. Stevenson has to make in his report on the "Forests of Manitoba" are these: (1)

"It should be understood that money spent on forests will give splendid returns, will mean increased yield in the future, provide new revenue for the government, and the enlargement of existing industries and the establishing of new ones which will, of course, provide additional employment for our people."

"Losses from forest fires in Manitoba as well as in other parts of Canada are much too high. These could be greatly reduced by increasing the staff of our fire organization, improving our means of communication and transportation and improving our fire-fighting equipment."

"An increased staff of forest and fire rangers is necessary so as to reduce the size of the range of district allotted each ranger."

Note: Each ranger in Manitoba is responsible for maintaining protection against fires over approximately one million acres of land, while in European countries each forest guard is allotted only two or three thousand acres."

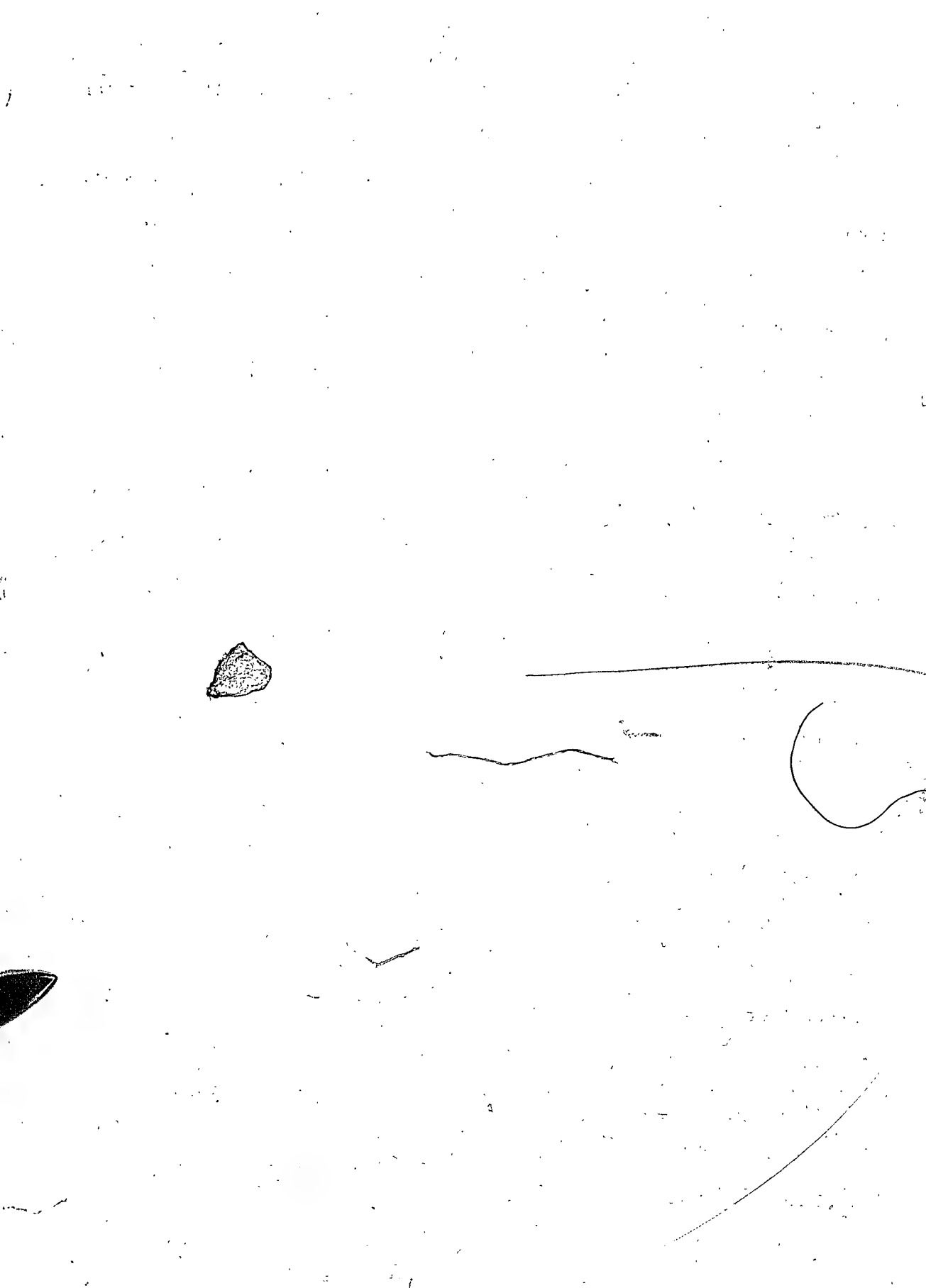
"The air patrol should be enlarged by increasing the number of planes, equipment and personnel; while further summer bases

should be established throughout the north so as to give a greater measure of protection to these areas."

Neither should it be forgotten that there is a great potential revenue awaiting Manitoba in the tourist traffic. Were additional forest reserves to be created, routes mapped out for trips lasting anytime up to two weeks and a comprehensive programme of advertising carried out in the more prominent United States newspapers, it is probable that a number of young men could be provided with useful employment during the summer months, acting as guides to visiting parties.

While schemes such as this and the domestic training plan might not absorb any substantial number of unemployed, the problem to be faced can only be solved satisfactorily bit by bit. Large scale measures, as a solution, rarely stand analysis and although it may be much slower and less spectacular, the most efficient way of tackling the situation is to settle a few at a time in various spheres of activity.

Much has been made of the necessity for vocational training. Our educational system obviously is not achieving the best results, for not enough attention is being paid to practical training. There are some who may question the wisdom of instructing young men and women still further when there are no jobs available for them, but it is cheaper in the long run to encourage them to utilize their leisure in this way rather than suffer the effects of an increase in the rate of juvenile delinquency. In any large community which pretends to have the interests of education at heart, an adequately equipped vocational school is essential. We may have the one but we certainly do not have the other.



To quote again from Census Monograph number 9:

"In Great Britain a special service to youth is conducted through the medium of employment service. There is a juvenile section in each employment office which works in close co-operation with the schools, advising young people before as well as after leaving school. For juveniles above school age who are without work, there is in each city a junior instruction centre quite distinct from the ordinary school system, being under the supervision of the Department of Labour. Effort is not confined to finding jobs but attempts are made to find for each young person the position for which he is best fitted. In short, vocational guidance for youth is organized on a national scale. It might be to the advantage of employers as well as to the young people of Canada if it received more attention here."

The fact that a few employers may try to obtain cheap labour from the vocational schools cannot be ignored, but it is short-sighted to condemn the project for that reason. If labour were to press for a Fair Wage Act in Manitoba some of the difficulties regarding wages encountered today would disappear.

Another fact to bear in mind is the lack of fluidity in the movement of workers in Canada. The reason is not hard to find, and it will continue to exist so long as the federal government refuses to realize that unemployment is a Canadian problem and not a provincial one.

Young men and women at present in receipt of relief are taking a risk when they move to another province to seek employment. If they get work they are lucky, but if they fail then they find that they are



not eligible for relief in the place to which they have gone, and they also find that they have usually been struck off the rolls in the centre from which they have come. Naturally the result is that many young men become transients or else they refuse to look for work in other provinces, fearing that they may lose what little security they have. We can only condemn their action when we approve of the conditions under which they live.

Some of the schemes which have been advanced to help the younger people may be called merely palliatives, although that does not necessarily diminish their necessity; but to ensure that the main goal is not lost sight of, an efficiently working youth employment centre should be established in Manitoba. In this centre would be enrolled all students leaving school who were without work. Their qualifications and particular aptitudes should be known from their school records. Such a centre would have to work in the closest co-operation with industry and this can be partially achieved, as is being done today, with the help of qualified placement officers whose duty it is to find out what openings there are in business and industry. But industry must learn to co-operate. If this employment centre is to function properly, it will be necessary to take a census of jobs in the province.

These and other schemes which suggest themselves would require to be worked out very carefully and every phase co-ordinated, unless confusion and duplication of activity is to result. It is suggested that the provincial government set up a Manitoba Youth Administration under one of the present provincial departments. An administrator would have to be appointed, responsible directly to the Minister concerned, and working in the fullest co-operation with him.



The administrator would be chairman of a group of citizens acting in a voluntary and advisory capacity. Under him there should be three or four assistants specializing in work projects, community centres, vocational guidance and training schemes and rural projects. In turn, these officials would co-operate with those citizen bodies which are engaged in work amongst the younger people, and the officials would be responsible for carrying out whatever policies were approved by the department.